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June 11, 2018

The Honorable Virginia Foxx
Chairwoman
U.S. House Committee on Education and the Workforce
2176 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Foxx:

We write to urge the U.S. House Committee on Education and the Workforce to schedule the Offshore Oil and Gas Worker Whistleblower Protection Act (H.R. 4304) for a Committee hearing and markup.

On April 20, 2010, people across the world learned of the blast on the Deepwater Horizon drilling rig, which resulted in 11 deaths and seriously injured 17 others. Unfortunately, this incident was not an anomaly. According to the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE), more than 1,400 injuries, 13 fatalities, and 324 evacuations or musters occurred from Fiscal Years 2011 through 2016. As an inherently dangerous work location and line of work generally, these workers are exposed to threats daily that they are uniquely qualified to identify.

The recommendation to the U.S. Department of Interior in the report following the Deepwater Horizon explosion made it clear that whistleblower protections were essential for the future safety of workers on the Outer Continental Shelf. This followed a similar recommendation made by the President's Commission. When considering these recommendations, the Chemical Safety Board, in a letter written to you dated February 16, 2018, urged the Committee to consider "enact legislation to provide clear and unambiguous authority for a Federal agency to take appropriate actions to discourage adverse action against employees who take safety actions and to establish a means of redress for employees who suffer retaliation as a result."

That same letter indicates that H.R. 4304, originally introduced by former Chairman of the Committee George Miller which we have since reintroduced, makes these necessary changes. Identical text of this legislation has passed in the House in the past with strong bipartisan support (315-93).

We urge you to grant the Chemical Safety Board's request and begin the process to enacting this legislation into law by scheduling a markup as soon as possible. America's workers in the Outer

The Honorable Virginia Foxx

June 11, 2018

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Continental Shelf deserve the same protections extended to others. Thank you for your attention to this important matter and for giving our request your consideration.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Mark Desaulnier in blue ink.

MARK DESAULNIER

Member of Congress

Handwritten signature of Robert C. 'Bobby' Scott in blue ink.

ROBERT C. "BOBBY" SCOTT

Ranking Member

Handwritten signature of Mark Takano in blue ink.

MARK TAKANO

Ranking Member

Subcommittee on Workforce Protections